



Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett
Southern District of Indiana**

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HOGSETT ANNOUNCES CHARGES AGAINST SEVEN FOR COCAINE TRAFFICKING IN EVANSVILLE AREA

Six month investigation results in arrests, dismantling of local drug operation

PRESS RELEASE

EVANSVILLE – Joseph H. Hogsett, United States Attorney, announced the indictment of seven individuals on charges relating to cocaine trafficking in Evansville and the surrounding region. This follows a six month investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”), the Evansville-Vanderburgh County Joint Drug Task Force, and other local law enforcement.

“Thanks to the collaborative work of federal and local law enforcement, we can announce today the dismantling of what we believe was one of the most organized cocaine trafficking operations in the Evansville area,” Hogsett said. “Let these arrests serve as notice that we will have zero tolerance for those who sell drugs in our neighborhoods.”

The indicted individuals include:

- Arthur Sherman, 32, Evansville
- Michael Hines, 38, Evansville
- Reginald White, 40, Evansville
- Troy Sanders, 47, Evansville
- Shelika Armstead, 38, Evansville
- Demetrius Howell (a.k.a. “Buck-O”), 33, Evansville
- Isiah Givens, 32, Mount Vernon

It is alleged that beginning in March of 2011, Sherman, White, Hines, Givens, Sanders, and Armstead all conspired to possess and distribute crack cocaine in the Evansville area. The indictment includes an extensive record of phone conversations between the six individuals in

which it is alleged they negotiated the acquisition and sale of crack cocaine and discussed the distribution of proceeds from those sales.

In addition, Sherman faces nine counts of knowingly distributing cocaine in the Evansville area. Sanders faces a similar count for allegedly possessing cocaine with the intent to distribute it. Demetrius Howell faces a charge of using a telephone with the intent to commit or facilitate a cocaine trafficking offense.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthias D. Onderak, who will prosecute the case for the government, said that if convicted of conspiring to possess with the intent to distribute, the six defendants could each face a sentence of ten years to life in federal prison and a fine of up to \$10 million. Howell could face up to eight years in prison if he is found guilty of his "phone count," and could additionally face a fine of up to \$250,000.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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